

BOOK REVIEWS

A COURSE IN PRACTICAL THERAPEUTICS. By Martin Emil Rehfuss, M.D., F.A.C.P. Professor of Clinical Medicine and Sutherland M. Prevost, Lecturer in Therapeutics, The Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia; F. Kenneth Albrecht, M.D., formerly Clinical Director U. S. Marine Hospital, Baltimore, Md.; and Alison Howe Price, A.B., M.D., Asst. Professor of Medicine, The Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia. The Williams and Wilkins Company, Baltimore, Md., 1948. \$15.00.

Every honest reviewer has to admit at times that his first impression of a book turns out to be entirely wrong—an experience which may convert him into an enthusiastic supporter of a work at first glance condemned. Such was the case with this reviewer's opinion of Practical Therapeutics. He was taken aback by the large size. The bulkiness appeared unnecessary for a book entitled "practical." However, this objection was overbalanced by the large print and easy readability. As he continued to investigate the body of the book his opinion became progressively more favorable until he now feels that he can recommend it enthusiastically.

Practical Therapeutics is a summary of the course in therapeutics at the Jefferson Medical College. The information has been gathered by the students year by year as part of their assignments in this course. These contributions have been reviewed and revised by the various members of the faculty teaching in the course and finally have been incorporated in this book. It is divided into four sections. The first is on general therapeutic principles. It includes the plan of a program for therapy for the individual patient, involving the physical and emotional aspects of the disease and of the patient. It has a chapter on prescription writing as well as other chapters on practical pharmacuetics and dietary principles. The second section is devoted to a discussion of symptoms and their management. The third and largest section takes up the individual therapy of various disease conditions. A brief etiological and diagnostic survey of each condition is given before treatment per se is discussed. The fourth section deals with various special subjects which the authors state should be of interest to the practitioner of general medicine but which seem to reflect the primary undergraduate teaching interest of the contributors.

The treatment of each symptom, condition, or disease is set forth in outlined form. Pharmaceutical prescriptions are given in detail, both U.S.P. preparations and proprietary remedies. The therapy is brought entirely up to the date of publication—summer of 1948. Particular mention should be made of the excellent illustrative diagrams by Wm. Toeche. These are often more helpful than several pages of text.

The book is excellent to use as a reference in a doctor's office and will probably be one of the most frequently consulted of any volume in his armamentarium. Whatever disagreement one may have with the individual opinions of the thirteen authors, one must conclude that the entire book is clear and logically planned and outlined. The inclusion and the occasional emphasis on proprietary drugs when U.S.P. preparations are available is of debatable merit but perhaps may be defended as part of current medical drug therapy (which is all too much guided by the sales representatives of the pharmaceutical houses)!

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MODERN DRUGS IN GENERAL PRACTICE. By Ethel Browning, M.D., Ch.B., Second Edition. The Williams & Wilkins Company, Baltimore, 1947. \$4.00.

This book by an English pharmacologist is designed to bring the busy practitioner up to date with a minimum of reading and succeeds unusually well. The opening chapter,

devoted to definitions and generalities, is similar to the first few pages of many other treatises on pharmacology and therapeutics and might well have been omitted from a book of this type, except for one remarkable statement which, if true, is not a generally known truth, namely that there is a "curious liability of sufferers from rheumatic affections to develop one of the most severe effects of sulfonamide toxicity—agranulocytosis."

Chapter II devotes nine pages to penicillin; the discussion is clear and adequate concerning essential chemical properties, mode of action, methods of administration in detail, and clinical indications with dose for each indication. The dose mentioned for subacute streptococcus viridans endocarditis would be considered too small by American cardiologists. An additional two pages gives a bibliography of 42 titles. Chapter III on The Sulfonamides consists of 24 pages; in addition to the general description of pharmacology and uses of the various compounds, there are important statistical comparisons. For example, the statement is made that the mortality from cerebrospinal fever treated with sulfamerazine is 6.7 per cent in contrast to 12.5 per cent for sulfadiazine.

Mortality figures for pneumonia cases treated with sulfonamides are much lower than figures from American hospitals.

Other well written chapters are the ones on digitalis, diuretics, adrenergic and cholinergic drugs, the barbiturates, the local anesthetics and the anthelmintics. Not so informative are the chapters on gold compounds, opium derivatives, gastro-intestinal drugs, local antiseptics and antithyroid substances.

The book is recommended for all practitioners and students of medicine.

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METHODS IN MEDICAL RESEARCH, Volume I, Van R. Potter, Editor-In-Chief. The Year Book Publishers, Inc., Chicago, Ill. 1948. \$8.00.

This fascinating volume presents detailed descriptions and discussions of methods used in medical research in four separate fields. The section on cellular respiration devotes 83 pages to respiration in tissue slices, the homogenate technique, analyses for tissue metabolites and an apparatus for respirometry in small intact animals. This material should appeal to workers in physiology laboratories. Gastroenterologic research methods include those involving cholera, preparation and use of the Mann-Williamson dog (for study of peptic ulcer), and gastric acidity. This section occupies only 20 pages. The assay of antibiotics (65 pages) appears to be adequately explored.

The fourth and largest (188 pages) section deals with the circulation, particularly with measurements of blood flow. Its broad scope includes consideration of recorders of venous drainage and mean flow, pulsatile flow meters, perfusion systems, regional blood flow, collateral circulation, cardiac output and contractility, and analysis of cardiovascular activity. Clinical and pre-clinical investigators will be attracted especially by the material on plethysmography, the roentgen electrokymograph, right heart catheterization, and measurement of renal, hepatic and cerebral blood flow.

Each subdivision is written by an appropriate expert, sometimes subjected to review by another expert, and often commented upon by a third. The volume is rich in detail, even to specifying from what manufacturer a given item may be obtained for the construction of apparatus. A bibliography follows each subdivision, and the entire book is indexed for subject and author.

The editors are to be congratulated upon this venture. They promise similar annual volumes, each to contain sections representing methods used in biochemistry, physiology and pharmacology, microbiology and immunology, and biophysics. Clinical scientists should add the present volume to their libraries, and physicians in general might well open its covers for a look at the techniques which are more and more being applied to the investigation of their patients.

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BACTERIAL AND VIRUS DISEASES—Antisera, Toxoids, Vaccines and Tuberculin in Prophylaxis and Treatment. By H. J. Parish, M.D., F.R.C.P.E., D.P.H., Clinical Research Director, Wellcome Foundation Ltd. The Williams and Wilkins Company, Baltimore, Maryland, 1948. \$2.75.

This little book is a catalogue of biological materials that are available in the British Isles for the treatment and prevention of infectious disease. One section is devoted to the consideration of therapeutic antisera and another to prophylactic agents. The preparation and proper technique for administration of each is very briefly described. A reasonably critical selection of these agents has been made and all of those included are well established in clinical medicine.

The author unfortunately has not presented any information which permits a rational selection of the various materials in the prevention or treatment of disease and his statements of the techniques of administration are not sufficiently detailed. The physician would frequently need to consult a more complete work to determine the proper application of these biologics.

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ORAL VACCINES AND IMMUNIZATION BY OTHER UNUSUAL ROUTES. By David Thomson, O.B.E., M.B., Director of the Pickett-Thomson Research Laboratory; Robert Thomson, M.B., Ch.B., Pathologist, St. Paul's Hospital, London. Assisted by James Todd Morrison, M.D. (Aberdeen). The Williams and Wilkins Company, Baltimore, 1948. \$11.00.

This book is another of those extraordinary compendia of the medical literature which have been assembled from time to time by the Thomsons and published under the auspices of the Pickett-Thomson Research Laboratory. Several previous volumes, the last of which is believed by the reviewer to have appeared in 1932, dealt with the whole of streptococcus infection and the relationship of these organisms to a variety of clinical conditions. These works are a storehouse of information and present summaries of all of the earlier investigations in these special fields of interest.

The present volume treats the subject of immunization against infectious disease by the administration of oral vaccines in a similar manner. The entire medical literature dealing with this subject has been summarized under various headings. The first considers the rationale of oral vaccination. The second and third describe in detail the results of experimental and field trials of immunization of human beings against typhoid fever, bacillary dysentery, tuberculosis, diphtheria, colds and influenza, gonococcal disease, intestinal infections, scarlet fever, tetanus and a miscellany of other less well studied disorders.

A fourth section deals with immunization by unusual routes including the respiratory tract, the skin and even the gingivae by the incorporation of vaccines in tooth paste.

The authors' conclusions are, for the most part, conservative and in accord with what might be regarded as the average published experience. They have unfortunately chosen to consider a subject of the greatest complexity and one in which controlled definitive experiments in human beings may be established rarely and only with great difficulty. The problems involved are emphasized when it is recognized that the most elaborate studies over a period of years have

failed to substantiate fully the prophylactic value of parental immunization against any of the mentioned infections except for typhoid fever, diphtheria, tetanus and possibly tuberculosis.

The evidence presented by the Thomsons supporting the value of immunization against tuberculosis by the ingestion of living BCG is stimulating and deserves inspection by workers in this field. The authors have probably overstated the usefulness of oral typhoid vaccine. Their rather strong arguments indicating that various respiratory infections, particularly the common cold, may be prevented by feeding large numbers of killed respiratory pathogens such as pneumococci and hemolytic streptococci are not in accord with a number of carefully controlled studies in this country. It is almost certain that these preparations are useless.

In conclusion and in retrospect, it seems unfortunate that the great talent that these authors have repeatedly demonstrated in the collection and summarization of the medical literature could not have been directed into one of the many fields in which comprehensive reviews would constitute investigative tools of the first magnitude.

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TEXTBOOK OF CHIROPODY. By Margaret J. McKenzie Swanson, B.Litt., F.Ch.S., Cofounder of Edinburgh Foot Clinic and School of Chiropractic. With 168 illustrations. The Williams and Wilkins Company, Baltimore, Md., 1948.

This book is written for students of chiropractic. It contains some useful information which would be helpful to physicians caring for minor foot diseases such as corns, but it is lacking of much useful information about the treatment of such a common disability as flat feet. Strapping, manipulative procedures, and the local application of drugs are stressed in many problems which would yield quickly to modern chemotherapy or surgical procedures. Wisely the author frequently warns the chiropractist throughout the book to send the patient to a doctor in response to his treatment is not prompt.

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OUTLINE OF PHYSIOLOGY. By William R. Amberson, Ph.D., Professor of Physiology, University of Maryland and Dietrich C. Smith, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Physiology, University of Maryland. Illustrations by the Late Norris Jones, Instructor in Scientific Illustrating, Swarthmore College and William Loechel. Second Edition. The Williams & Wilkins Company, Baltimore, 1948. \$5.00.

This "Outline" is in no sense a textbook of physiology for medical students, nor, as the title might suggest, would it provide the medical man preparing for a Board examination a means of acquiring an adequate dose of physiology in tasteless capsules to be absorbed as quickly and painlessly as possible. Rather it is a highly individual presentation from the biological viewpoint of the authors' concept of the philosophy and content of modern physiology. To an extent unparalleled in similar works it incorporates the historical development of the science into the account of physiological mechanisms. Outstanding contributions, from the observations of Aristotle on the electric fishes to those of the last decade, are described in a refreshingly intimate manner, including generous quotations from the originals and portraits of the men themselves. Among recent advances thus described may be mentioned the study of the protein chains in muscle as revealed by x-ray diffraction methods, the revolution in our concepts of capillary flow resulting from the work of Chambers and Zweifach, the mapping of the respiratory centers by the Ranson group, Wolff's studies of human gastric secretion, Pitt's studies of the mechanism of the renal excretion of acid and Long's investigation of the adrenal reaction to stressful situations. The treatment of most topics is thoroughly up-to-date. However,